

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
TRSE-00 /066 W  
-----080822 190218Z /75

R 181611Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4297  
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE POUCH  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
DIA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL GENOA POUCH  
AMCONSUL MILAN POUCH  
AMCONSUL NAPLES POUCH  
AMCONSUL PALERMO POUCH  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
SHAPEUSNR  
CINCEUR, VAIHINGEN, GERMANY  
USDOCOSOUTH  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 13249

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: PERTINI: THE MAN

1. IN INTRODUCING HER INTERVIEW WITH PERTINI, ORIANA FALLACI NOTED THAT PERTINI STOOD OUT--AND ALMOST STOOD ALONE--AMONG ITALIAN POLITICAL FIGURES FOR DEVOTION TO HIS IDEALS AND FOR HIS COURAGE, HONESTY, OUTSPOKENNESS AND DIGNITY. LIBERTY, SHE SAID, WAS HIS  
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RELIGION. HE WAS HAPPILY MARRIED, HAD DEEP AND BROAD CULTURAL INTERESTS, READ VORACIOUSLY AND WAS "ONE OF THE FEW POLITICIANS OF WHOM ITALIANS COULD BE PROUD." BY ALL ACCOUNTS, FALLACI'S OUTLINE OF PERTINI'S CHARACTER TRAITS IS ACCURATE. WHAT EMERGES FROM PERTINI'S RECORD IS ABOVE ALL HIS DIAMOND-HARD INTEGRITY, HIS UNQUESTIONABLE HONESTY, HIS FANATICAL COMMITMENT TO LIBERTY. TO PERTINI POLITICS AND MORALS ARE INSEPARABLY INTERTWINED; PUBLIC MORALITY AND PRIVATE

MORALITY ARE INDIVISIBLE. HIS LIFE EXEMPLIFIES THIS OUTLOOK.

2. PERTINI'S CHARACTER HAS BEEN DEEPLY MARKED BY HIS FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM AND THE PERSONAL SUFFERING WHICH RESULTED FROM IT--EIGHT MONTHS IN JAIL, FLIGHT TO FRANCE AND, AFTER RETURNING TO ITALY, 15 FURTHER YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT. IN OTHER WORDS, PERTINI SPENT THE HEIGHT OF HIS MANHOOD BEHIND BARS AS A POLITICAL RESISTER. HIS FEELINGS IN LOOKING BACK ON THIS PERIOD WERE EVIDENT IN A POIGNANT PASSAGE IN HIS FALLACI INTERVIEW:

"I WOULD BE A BRAGGART IF I SAID THAT I AM GLAD TO HAVE SPENT 15 YEARS IN JAIL. LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR, ORIANA; MY YOUTH WAS SPENT IN SACRIFICES. I WAS AN EXUBERANT YOUNG MAN FULL OF ARDOR. AND THOSE SACRIFICES WEIGHED ON ME. OH, HOW THEY HAVE WEIGHED\* BUT A MAN WITH FAITH CANNOT SHUN SACRIFICES AND MUST PAY PERSONALLY. IN JAIL, I THOUGHT, I AM NOT HERE FOR HAVING COMMITTED A CRIMINAL OFFENSE BUT FOR HAVING STOOD FOR MY BELIEF. AND PRIDE COMPENSATED FOR THE SACRIFICE. OF COURSE, EVERY NOW AND THEN I GAVE IN. FOR INSTANCE, THAT MORNING IN WHICH I HEARD THE BELLS OF VENTOTENE AND OPENED THE WINDOW AND WAS ASSAILED BY SPRING, BY A PERFUME OF FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE NIGHT AND FILL THE AIR WITH FRAGRANCE. AND WHILE I WAS LISTENING TO THE BELLS, WHILE I WAS BREATHING IN THIS SCENT, I HEARD IN THE DISTANCE A LOVE SONG. A SONG THAT CAME FROM A FISHING BOAT. I FELT DIZZY, LIKE A PAIN FOR THIS LIFE THAT WAS COMING IN THROUGH THE WINDOW AND THAT I COULD NOT TOUCH. ALL MY LONGINGS, TUMULTS OF LONGINGS WERE ONCE AGAIN AROUSED. YOU CAN IMAGINE, ORIANA, THE LONGIN  
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OF A YOUNG MAN WHO IS NOT EVEN THIRTY."

3. PERTINI'S LIFE AND VALUES WERE GREATLY INFLUENCED BY HIS RESISTENCE AND IMPRISONMENT. THE EXPERIENCE INFLAMED HIS ALREADY-EXISTING COMMITMENT TO INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND HIS CONCERN FOR THE UNDERDOG, THE VICTIM, THE NON-CONFORMIST, THE DISSENTER. IT FOLLOWS THAT HE IS A MAN OF GREAT TOLERANCE. THROUGH THE COURSE OF HIS PUBLIC LIFE WHEN HE SAW INJUSTICE, HE BECAME PASSIONATELY OUTRAGED. AND HE BECAME A LONER, NOT IN THE RECLUSIVE, SECRETIVE WAY OF ALDO MORO, BUT IN THE MANNER OF AN INDEPENDENT SPIRIT WHO IS LOYAL ONLY TO HIS OWN IDEALS AND SCEPTICAL OF INSTITUTIONS.

4. LOW LIVING AND HIGH THINKING GENERALLY CHARACTERIZE PERTINI'S PERSONAL MODE OF LIFE. HE IS DIRECT, EARNEST AND SIMPLE IN MANNER AND SPEECH. SYMPTOMATICALLY, IN ITS CLARITY AND CONCISION, HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS CONTRASTED MARKEDLY WITH THE USUAL PLEONASTIC EFFUSIONS OF ITALIAN POLITICAL FIGURES. HE PREFERS HOME LIFE TO SOCIETY. PERTINI HAS A GREAT AFFECTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE--AND RECEIVED 30,000 OF THEM AS CHAMBER PRESIDENT--AND IS GREATLY ADMIRE BY YOUNG MEMBERS OF THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT. HE HAS A LIVELY INTEREST IN THE ARTS, INCLUDING THE AVANT GUARD IN MUSIC, PAINTING

AND THEATER. FOR INTELLECTUALS, HOWEVER, HE HAS AN INTENSE DISLIKE. AS HE TOLD FALLACI, "I HAVE NEVER FORGIVEN THE INTELLECTUALS FOR BEING COWARDLY. EXCEPT FOR A MINORITY, IN ITALY THE INTELLECTUAL CLASS HAS BEEN SO COWARDLY\* IT ADAPTED ITSELF SO QUICKLY TO FASCISM\* AFTERWARDS IT WENT AROUND IN SACKCLOTH AND ASHES; BUT BEFORE\* ORIANA, I DO NOT FORGIVE A CULTURED MAN IF HE BETRAYS THE CAUSE OF DEMOCRACY BY NOT FIGHTING."

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CINCEUR, VAIHINGEN, GERMANY  
USDOCOSOUTH  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 13249

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA SIX)

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

5. WHAT ARE PERTINI'S WEAKNESSES? ACCORDING TO THOSE WHO KNOW HIM, PERTINI IS NOT A BROAD OR A PROFOUND THINKER. THE FRANK VIEW OF EVERYONE WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN, INCLUDING PERTINI'S FRIENDS AND DEVOTEES, IS THAT HE IS OF MEDIOCRE INTELLIGENCE. AS MINISTER OF

INDUSTRY DONAT-CATTIN BLUNTLY PUT IT TO AMBASSADOR GARDNER. "HE IS ALL HEART AND NO HEAD." WHETHER OR NOT THIS CONSENSUS UNDERESTIMATES  
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THE MAN, WE REPORT IT FOR THE RECORD. IT IS ALSO AGREED THAT PERTINI IS OFTEN SHORT-TEMPERED AND EMOTIONAL BUT THAT HE QUICKLY OVERCOMES HIS PIQUE. HE CAN BE STUBBORN AND SELF-RIGHTEOUS, WITH AN UNSHAKABLE CONVICTION IN HIS OWN CORRECTNESS. CONSEQUENTLY, ONCE HE MAKES UP HIS MIND, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SWAY HIM. HE IS TOUCHY AND TENDS NEVER TO FORGET EITHER A SLIGHT--OR A COURTESY. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT HE IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO FLATTERY. ALTHOUGH CASUAL AND INFORMAL AND IN HIS WAY A SIMPLE PERSON, PERTINI IS RATHER VAIN AND EXPECTS DEFERENCE AND RESPECT.

6. PERTINI HAS THE GRACE OF ACKNOWLEDGING FAULTS OF CHARACTER. TO FALLACI, HE IDENTIFIED AS HIS WORST TRAIT: "MY BAD TEMPER. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A PASSIONATE, IMPULSIVE MAN. I CANNOT LAY THE BLAME FOR THIS ON THE JAIL, ON MY SUFFERINGS; AND ACTUALLY I HAVE BEEN IMPROVING. OH, HOW MANY PEOPLE I HAVE ATTACKED WITH MY SUDDEN RAGES, MY RIGID ATTITUDES, MY INTERRUPTIONS\* PARTY COMRADES, COLLEAGUES. EVEN AS PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER, YOU KNOW? THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY ME CERTAINLY DO NOT KNOW HOW SORRY I AM FOR HAVING DONE SO, HOW SORRY I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN. IN MY DEFENSE I CAN ONLY SAY THAT MY PASSION HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORAL. AFTERWARDS I FEEL SORRY. AND SO I START GRUMBLING; DASH IT, I SHOULD NOT HAVE FLOWN INTO A RAGE WITH THAT FRIEND OF MINE, WITH THAT COLLEAGUE. I AM GOING TO OFFER HIM A CUP OF COFFEE TODAY AND APOLOGIZE. I AM A HUMAN PERSON, ORIANA, THIS WHY I AM A BAD POLITICIAN."

7. PERTINI IS AN ATHEIST. HE WAS, HOWEVER, STRONGLY IMPRESSED BY HIS MOTHER'S DEVOT CATHOLICISM. HE HAS SAID THAT IN PRISON HE FOUND SOLACE IN READING THE LIFE OF CHRIST. AS A RESULT OF THESE EXPERIENCES AND HIS INNATE TOLERANCE, PERTINI HAS NEVER BEEN ANTI-CLERICAL AND SO FAR AS HE HAS HAD ANY POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, IT HAS EVIDENTLY BEEN UNPROBLEMATIC. BUT HE HAS REMAINED A STRICT SECULARIST BOTH IN HIS POLITICAL AND HIS PRIVATE LIFE. HE IS THE FIRST ITALIAN PRESIDENT TO HAVE BEEN MARRIED IN A  
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CIVIL CEREMONY ALONE.

8. IN COMMON WITH OTHER ITALIAN POLITICIANS, PERTINI HAS HAD RELATIVELY LITTLE TOUCH WITH THE WORLD OUTSIDE ITALY, EITHER IN TERMS OF CULTURE OR TRAVEL. HOWEVER, HE RETAINS A STRONG ATTACHMENT TO FRANCE; HE LIVED THERE FOR THREE YEARS DURING THE FASCIST PERIOD; HE OWNS AN APARTMENT IN NICE AND WAS PACKING HIS SUITCASE TO GO MEET

HIS WIFE THERE THEY DAY AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO ELECT HIM PRESIDENT. HIS FRENCH IS FLUENT. DURING HIS PERIOD AS PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, PERTINI SOUGHT TO REFORM THE CHAMBER, WHOSE RULES WERE THEN ALMOST 100 YEARS OLD, AND HE DEVELOPED AN INTEREST AT THAT TIME IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND THE AMERICAN CONGRESS. IN THIS CONNECTION HE PLANNED TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1969 BUT IN THE END CANCELLED THE TRIP APPARENTLY BECAUSE HE WANTED TO BE INVITED BY THE CONGRESS RATHER THAN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. CONSEQUENTLY, HE HAS NEVER VISITED THE UNITED STATES. HE IS SAID TO READ ENGLISH WITH SOME DIFFICULTY BUT IS UNABLE TO SPEAK OR UNDERSTAND IT.

9. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY RECORDS, PERTINI TRAVELED TO EASTERN EUROPE IN THE EARLY POSTWAR PERIOD. IN APRIL 1949 HE WAS A DELEGATE TO THE WORLD CONGRESS OF PARTISANS FOR PEACE IN PARIS AND ATTENDED ONE SESSION OF THAT GROUP'S WORLD COMMITTEE IN STOCKHOLM IN MARCH OF 1950. HE WENT TO MOSCOW THE MONTH BEFORE, TO DISCUSS A FIVE-POINT PEACE PROGRAM TO BE DEALT WITH AT THE STOCKHOLM MEETING. HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE ITALIAN GROUP WHICH ATTENDED THE FUNERAL OF PREMIER DIMITROV IN SOFIA IN JULY 1949 AND WAS IN MOSCOW IN 1957 AS A MEMBER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY DELEGATION TO THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION. HE VISITED CZECHOSLOVAKIA AT LEAST ONCE, IN THE FALL OF 1957.

10. PERTINI MET HIS WIFE CARLA DURING THEIR COMMON RESISTANCE ACTIVITIES AND THEY WERE MARRIED IN 1945. ALTHOUGH THEY SHARE AN INTEREST IN POLITICS AND THE ARTS, THEIR AGE DIFFERENCE, THEIR LACK OF CHILDREN AND MRS. PERTINI'S OWN PROFESSIONAL LIFE HAVE RESULTED INCREASINGLY IN THEIR LIVING SOMEWHAT SEPARATE LIVES. SOME YEARS AGO  
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MRS. PERTINI WAS ACTIVE IN UDI, THE WOMAN'S ORGANIZATION AFFILIATED WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY BUT WHOSE MEMBERS INCLUDE NON-COMMUNISTS. SHE NOW WORKS AS A PSYCHOLOGIST IN THE DRUG CLINIC OF A ROME HOSPITAL. MRS. PERTINI LEADS A VERY PRIVATE LIFE AND IS SAID TO BE TOTALLY ABSORBED IN HER PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS. SHE IS NOTED FOR HER NON-CONFORMITY AND NOT SURPRISINGLY HAS DECLINED TO RESIDE IN THE QUIRINALE PALACE. WHEN WE ASKED A CLOSE FRIEND OF HERS WHETHER MRS. PERTINI HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON HER HUSBAND, THE ANSWER WAS, "I CANNOT SAY FOR CERTAIN, BUT IT WOULD BE SURPRISING IF SHE DID NOT." GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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